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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

When a change of address is requested,
both the new and old address should be
given. Two weeks' notice is required for
changing an address.

APPRAISALS—"EXPERTISING"

The "Art News" is not a dealer in
art or literary property but deals with
the dealer and to the advantage of both
owner and dealer. Our Bureau of "Ex-
pertising and Appraisal" has conducted
some most important appraisals.

ART BOOK REVIEW

TECHNIQUE OF PRACTICAL DRAWING. For
Teachers, Students and Professional Ar-
tists. By Edward S. Pilsworth. The
Macmillan Co., N. Y.

At a time when the Independents,
"Ovists" and "Dadaists" are so greatly
in vogue, it is refreshing to have a book
that stands so squarely for the value of good
drawing. This remark applies with par-
ticular force to those who draw for repro-
duction.

This matter is perhaps of less conse-
quence to the painter who produces a pic-
ture which is itself the final and ultimate
result. In such a case, if a drawing is some-
what "off," the deficiency can be softened
or concealed by the use of camouflaging
paint. But when the item that comes from
the artist is to be reproduced, all the
shortcomings that lurk in the drawing are
sure to be revealed, if not accented, so that
the value of good basic drawing is discov-
ered sooner or later. Good drawing makes
for perfection, whatever else may be said
about it, and it ought never to be neglected.

The book is concerned with pencil, pen
and brush techniques and with mixed tech-
niques. It sets forth comprehensively the
tools for the various departments and ex-
plains their use. The reader at least gains
a theoretical idea of the mechanical pro-
cesses—what may be done and what may not
be done with these to be reckoned with.
The importance of paper is well brought
out and the author says a few words about
Ben Day that will be stimulating, at least
to the young artist who encounters the pro-
cess for the first time.

The book will save much time and no end
of disappointments on the part of the would-
be professional and commercial artist who
is about to enter the field or who has al-
ready entered it, and it will do no harm for
the seasoned artist to read carefully.

A QUESTION OF JUDGMENT

We have been taken to task by a new
fellow art publisher for our failure to
mention the names of a New York art
dealer and art firm in the reprinting,
as a compliment to his energy and be-
cause of its interest, of a story which
he recently wrote and published, in
a Brooklyn daily.

While we do not consider ourselves
in any way on the defensive in this
matter, we regret that our fellow pub-
lisher should so "early in the game,"
reveal his evident ignorance, not only
of the ethics of journalism, the publish-
ing business, and of the art trade, but
presumably of the law of libel. The
story in question of the handling for
sale by a well known and long estab-
lished art dealer and an equally old
art house, of a picture attributed to
Whistler, but which our fellow pub-
lisher declares a "fake," was so well
and picturesquely told that we repub-
lished it as what Horace Greeley would
have called "interestin' readin'". But
as we had only the opinion of the
publisher and writer on the one hand,
and the denial of his story by the
parties he named on the other, and as
there was and is also the very natural
presumption that if the picture is false,
the dealer and the firm he accuses,
might have handled the work in good
faith—we could see no reason to pillory
them—possibly render ourselves liable
to a libel suit, and annoy persons who
hitherto have borne and still bear, a
good reputation in the trade. The deal-
er happens to be an old patron, the firm
is not, but this did not influence us in
any way, for we consider the ART NEWS
has proved its courage in exposing
fraud in art dealing too many times in
its long life as art journals go, of over
16 years, to be rightly accused of want
of courage at this late day by a new-
comer in the art publishing field, at
least.

THE BOOK SALE SEASON

Reviewing the pre-holiday book sale se-
ason, the literary reviewer of the N. Y. Even-
ing Post says: "Surely, these sales, taking
place all along the line, covering a very wide
range of material, and happening at the
very end of the pre-holiday season, furnish
an excellent opportunity to gauge general
conditions.

"The results at all of these sales show the
same general condition. It should be noted,
to begin with, that they were calculated to
develop keen competition because of the
preponderance of lots of moderate value,
that the competition of heavy importations
had its effect among large dealers and the
usual holiday diversions and activities, to-
gether with unsettled business conditions
and the new feature of heavy tax payments,
all have united to depress the auction mar-
ket. Taking all of these factors into ac-
count the general result was very satis-
factory. Many rarities brought good prices;
others sold low enough to be real bargains
to either dealers or collectors; and miscella-
neous books, especially of the bundle grade,
furnished good pickings, but the average,
nevertheless, showed that books are stand-
ing up admirably under the general deflation
now going on all along the line. One col-
lector states the situation pretty correctly
when he says that 'really rare books of the
first rank are as solid and stable as Govern-
ment bonds.' Of course, both must in-
evitably be affected by the conditions
through which we are passing.

There will be much speculation as to what
the remainder of the season has in store.
For the past two years sales were made in
January with the clearest assurance of an
unprecedented market for rarities of which
an abnormally large supply was on the
market. There will be, of course, much un-
certainty this month; the tendency will
probably be to lessen the number of impor-
tant sales and this will reduce the number
of rare books that have been coming on the
market. Business must inevitably slow up
somewhat; there will be closer buying and
prices generally will be lower, while there
will be more careful study of valuable of-
ferings by ardent collectors.

LATTER DAY ART CRITICISM

"A fool may fear a twig—but a wise man dreads a
bandit.
Which undoubtedly is clever—if one can understand it."
—Parody on Martin Farquhar Tupper.

The Art of Prof. Roerich

(Mrs. Augusta Patterson in Town and Country)

"What an artist has to say, if he has any-
thing to say, should be manifest in his work.
Else should he forever hold his peace. In
the case of Prof. Roerich there is the imme-
diate conviction of the esemplastic faculty,
which being translated, means the power to
mould the manifold of experience into new
unities. There is something bigger than the
ability to visualize facile mental images, to
lay cunning artistic plots. The very basis
of some of Roerich's best works is the con-
tinued wonder of man at the very fact of
living, at the great miracle of life."

Rather Severe—But Sincere

(Peyton Boswell in N. Y. American)

"It is about time someone spoke up and
proclaimed the real significance and lack of
significance of the esoteric and exotic art
that from time to time is being washed to
our shores on a tidal wave of tea. Some-
times it is neo-Persian, sometimes it is
Slavic Renaissance; sometimes it is this,
sometimes it is that. Often it is interesting
from an ethnological, or a sociological, or
a pathological, or a neuropathic point of
view, but seldom does it fall within the defi-
nition of art."

"The exhibitions are curious, entertaining,
but almost never do they inspire an Amer-
ican with emotion that can, by any stretch
of terminology, be called aesthetic. Whether
they be considered by the grand old defini-
tion of Plato, or by the modernistic one of
Clive Bell, they cannot pass as art that has
any marked significance for us. And as for
living with the individual pictures, one might
just as soon prefer the companionship of
an Eskimo totem pole or the grotesque
images of the Aztecs."

"Always these exhibitions are cataloged de-
luxe, with a complete and authoritative essay
on the artist and his urge. This 'introduc-
tion' is usually more interesting than the
show. It puts up a preliminary bout with
philosophy and makes steps all around the
higher criticism. It is learned in the extreme
and the reader, unless he is wary, too often
feels profoundly grateful for being admitted
even thus far into the charmed circle of
those who can really comprehend. If the
pictures themselves fail to set him a-quiver
with aesthetic joy, he merely blames him-
self."

Truth Scrambles from Printed Matter

"But truth has a way of scrambling from
under an avalanche of printed matter. The
pictures may perfectly reflect the soul of a
tribe of forgotten savages, and thus may be
fine documents for a student of pragmatism,
or they may pander to the imagination of
those who busy their fancies with Oriental
abductions and harems, or they may do sev-
eral other equally interesting things, but if
they fail to inspire and ennoble the best that
is in our American civilization they do not
constitute art for our consumption—in spite
of all the ink and oolong that can be spilled
in their behalf."

"At a small local upstairs gallery there is
an exhibition of 174 paintings (chiefly in
tempera) by the Russian, Nicolas Roerich.
The show was opened recently with a tea,
to which society was invited. There is an
80-page catalog, printed on cameo paper,
profusely illustrated, with a cover in three
colors, and a 7,000-word introduction by Dr.
Christian Brinton. This introduction is the
best exposition of an exhibition of paintings
that the present writer has ever read. It
takes its note from the verse served to start
it, and leads the reader to understand com-
pletely the pictures of Roerich. The verse
is as follows:

"His Blue is the Blue of the Northern Twilight;
His Green is the Green of the sea-grass;
His Red is the Red of Parian watchfires,
And his Flame—from Byzantine arrows."

"Strident, Subjective Illustration."

"That is exactly what Roerich's art is.
It is subjective illustration. It is strident,
it fights from the walls like a horde of
morose savages. It is extremely interesting,
from an ethnological and even archaeological
standpoint, but so far as providing aesthetic
food for our Anglo-Saxon (American, if you
will) civilization, it does not exist. You
would not want one of the pictures in your
house. Repose would be impossible.

"After looking at the pictures you feel that
you understand a lot more about ancient
Russia, and also, perhaps, have a new in-
sight into the foundation of Russian civil-
ization, but that is all.

"We are grateful to the artist, for his pig-
mental interpretation; we are grateful to the
dealer for the use of his gallery, and we are
grateful to Dr. Brinton for his masterly ex-
planation; but we are going to look else-
where for the artistic interpretation of our-
selves—even as far away as ancient China,
whose masterpieces of landscape painting
speak to us in a language that enters our
heart and makes us bigger and better, or
as far as old Egypt, where beauty rose like
a fairy out of a lotus flower."

George Bogert painted during most of
the summer in and about Southampton,
L. I. He has returned to his studio, 108
W. 57 St.

ART BOOK REVIEWS



MARTIN BIRNBAUM

INTRODUCTIONS — PAINTERS, SCULPTORS AND
GRAPHIC ARTISTS, by Martin Birnbaum;
Frederic Fairchild Sherman, N. Y., 1919.

It is axiomatic that a good thing is never
old, and so this belated brief review of Mr.
Birnbaum's compilation of the various schol-
arly and instructive Introductions he pre-
pared, through several years, for the series
of exhibitions, arranged by him in the gal-
leries of the old Berlin Photographic Society
of which he was the N. Y. manager for some
years, may not be untimely or without value
to sincere art lovers.

For Mr. Birnbaum is that rara avis, a suc-
cessful dealer in art works (now associated
with the Scott & Fowles Co.), and a learned,
cultivated and appreciative connoisseur and
collector. To these introductions in the cata-
logs of his exhibitions of the work of such
artists as Charles Conder, Leon Bakst, Mau-
rice Sterne, Paul Manship, Elie Nadel-
man, Edmund Dulac, Kay Neilsen and Jules
Pascin, which work he also introduced to
American art lovers—their success was un-
doubtedly largely due. And these Catalog
Introductions unquestionably also heightened
the reputation and fame of such artists as
Aubrey Beardsley, Charles H. Shannon,
Charles Ricketts, Albert Sterner, Robert
Blum, Alfred Stevens and John Flaxman in
this country.

To just enough of biographical details,
agreeably put, with an estimate of individual
ability and a description of individual ten-
dencies, Mr. Birnbaum has added in the
case of each artist, a charmingly expressed
and kindly but just criticism. He has
avoided pedantry and the juggling with tech-
nical terms which only mystify and annoy
the average reader and which so greatly mars
most of the so-called art criticism, and even
the art writing in American periodicals to-
day—as noticed elsewhere is our columns.

To those art lovers who wish to acquire a
knowledge of the work of the noted artists
of whom Mr. Birnbaum has written, with
instruction and entertainment at the same
time, this handsome, well illustrated little
volume can be warmly recommended.

WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY IN FRANCE by
J. F. Boucher, official painter to the
French Army. Text by Captain David
Gray, U. S. A., with an introduction by
Lieut.-Col. Theodore Roosevelt. Forty il-
lustrations. Leroy Phillips, N. Y.

For any one—no matter how remotely
connected he may have been with the war—
and there were few indeed who did not
serve in some capacity—Mr. Boucher has
rendered a distinct service. For this collec-
tion of paintings is perhaps one of the great-
est souvenirs any American could have of
the part played by the American forces
abroad. The artist has treated his subjects
with rare faithfulness of detail but never for
the moment has forgotten that he is an
artist and even the ugliest details of grim
warfare have been softened and mellowed
by the soft touch of his brush. The diver-
sity of subjects that he covers in the 40
illustrations that make up the book is re-
markable. Here is a striking portrait of
Gen. Mangin, then an American naval gun
in action, again some colored troops in a
dugout and another canvas of the desolation
of No Mans Land. Perhaps the most im-
pressive of all is the painting of Gen.
Pershing leading a contingent of American
troops down the Champs Elysees in the
great Allied Victory parade on July 14, 1919,
in Paris.

Capt. Gray, in addition to having been a
liaison officer, is also a facile writer and the
text which he has written to accompany the
paintings is well worthy of such an honor.
Lieut.-Col. Theodore Roosevelt contributes
the introduction to the volume, and recalls
some of the ties—both old and newly forged
—that bind us to the sister republic over-
seas.

DETROIT

The annual exhibition of paintings by
Michigan artists is on at the Museum dur-
ing the month. Some \$300 has been appro-
priated by the institute for the purchase of
works by resident artists.